

# EDSON

ALBERTA, CANADA



Published by the Edson Board of Trade

-Incorporated by Dominion Charter-

John E. Thomson, President

Thos. Matheson, Vice President

John H. Griggs, Secretary Treasurer

December 1915

## **Edson has:**

Four Churches

Immigration Hall

Hospital

Customs Office

Inland Revenue Office.

Dominion Land Sub-agency

R.N.W.M.P. Inspector and Staff

Branch of Merchants' Bank of Canada

Fire equipment costing \$10,000

Weekly newspaper

Oddfellows' Hall

Court House Site

The above are only a few of Edson's public and other institutions, but prove beyond doubt that the town is now the centre of its district and is bound to grow as outlying development takes place. See remarks in this booklet in regard to agriculture natural resources and railway development.



## Edson and Its District

Edson was built as, and is, a Divisional Point on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, situated 130 miles west of Edmonton, while the Canadian Northern Railway main line Divisional Point joins the townsite on the south. It is 125 miles east of the boundary between Alberta and British Columbia where these transcontinental lines run through the Yellowhead Pass. It is about 200 miles north west of Calgary and is in many respects similarly situated. But its altitude is much lower than that of

Calgary, and the summer moisture is ample and reliable for grain growing purposes.

## RAILROADS

The Yellowhead Pass is of such a low altitude and is so favorable for railroad operation that it is estimated that these two railroads will get very much more than what might be considered their fair share of the transcontinental and other long haul business developing. Already the fishing industry off Prince Rupert is sending train loads of fish through on express time. The Panama Canal will eventually involve a great diversion and increase of traffic which will feed these railways. As Alberta, British Columbia and the whole of Canada increase in population and enterprise, these roads will be the scenes of much activity, and these terminals situated at the foot of the mountain divisions will be busy hives of industry. Both roads have provided large terminal sites for trackage, large roundhouses as well as machine shops and other equipment. The C. N. R. has a through freight and passenger service to Van-

couver and the G.T.P. now has in operation a through freight and passenger service from Prince Rupert on the coast to Winnipeg. From Edson west the passenger service is tri-weekly and has been taken advantage of by many visitors to the San Francisco and San Diego Fairs wishing to see this new scenic route. East of Edson there is a daily service. The C.N.R. Divisional Point while joining Edson has a separate Post Office (Tollerton) and constitutes a separate municipality. A stage carrying mail connects the two.

## SCENERY

The scenery of the foothills and mountains from Edson westwards along the railways is unsurpassed. The Dominion Government is making numerous roads within the Park to points of great interest and to Sulphur Hot Springs the equal of any in the world.

## GAME

Hunting and trapping is carried on extensively in certain districts surrounding Edson. Tourist hunters come here annually to hunt big game. A num-

ber of hunting parties succeeded in getting moose near Edson during the season this year. Fish abound in all the streams and lakes—salmon-trout being a favorite.

## **The District and Its Resources**

The country tributary to Edson would in itself make a small province and it has immense resources of natural wealth. The district being new and development having followed the advent of the railways which are still under construction, only the fringe of its resources has been touched or even explored. Still, enough has been done to give a clear indication of the strong future outlook in store for both the town and the district.

### **TIMBER**

Along some streams and in other protected places is found merchantable timber in paying quantities: as the country develops saw-mills are being established to meet its requirements. The railways are getting their ties and piling from contractors working in this district.

## MARL AND CLAY

There are numerous deposits of marl in the vicinity as well as of the necessary kind of clay to mix with it in the making of Portland Cement. At Marlboro 16 miles west of Edson the Edmonton Portland Cement Co. have equipped a fine plant and are manufacturing Portland Cement.

## STONE AND MINERALS

In addition to clay suitable for cement making, there is found fire-clay and brick-clay. The brick-clay has been tested and the sample products have been found to be equal to the best pressed brick in use in the Canadian west. There is also good sandstone along the McLeod and Embarras rivers. Placer gold has been worked successfully in the streams but the original deposits at the headwaters of the rivers have not been located. Experts say that the prospects of finding gas and oil are as likely here as in any other part of the Province.

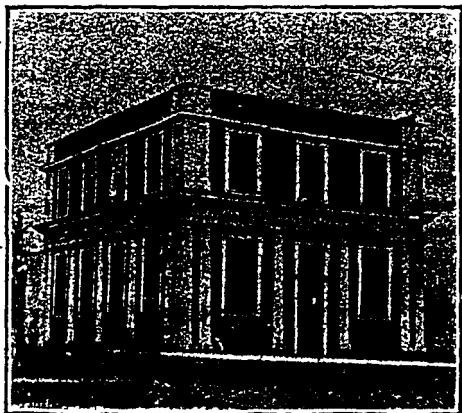
Efforts have been made to locate iron and there is considerable evidence of oxide of iron but no large deposit of iron ore has been located as yet. Should

iron ore in sufficient quantity be located it would make Edson the Pittsburg of Canada as practically the whole country is underlaid with immense deposits of coal of an excellent quality.

## COAL

The town of Edson is underlaid with a coal bed, but it is not being worked. Along the main line of the G. T. P. at Pocatong on the Athabasca River a large mine is in operation and across the river on the C.N.R. another is being operated. In the foothills south and southwest of Edson a number of outcroppings have been located and for township after township the whole territory has been leased. A few of these claims have been tapped by railway construction but there are larger known deposits than any that have been tapped, and arrangements are now being made for opening up new properties. The G.T.P. are operating the Alberta Coal Branch to Coalspur and Lovett (Pacific Pass Coal Fields). From Coalspur there is a branch to the Yellowhead mine and another to Mountain Park. The line to Lovett will be extended to British Collieries and ultimately to Calgary.





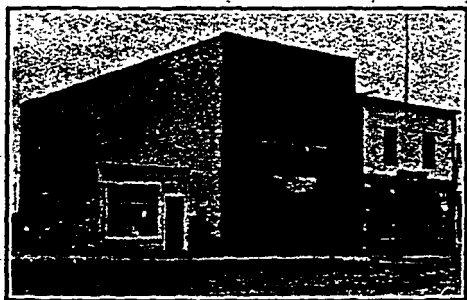
## LOCAL RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the branches mentioned as built and in consideration, the C.N.R. has a survey south to some coal deposits and the G. T. P. has a survey through Edson's principal farming district down the McLeod Valley, which will connect with a survey running via Grande Prairie through the Pine Pass. The Calgary Board of Trade have intimated their willingness to co-operate with this Board to secure a road independent of either

of the roads here now, to connect Calgary with the North Country via Edson.

## Agriculture

Agriculturally, Edson will take a high place. The soil is an alluvial deposit, consisting principally of a rich mellow clay, entirely free from alkali, and practically free from stone. The topography of the Edson district is principally of a rolling nature with numerous streams and an occasional lake. The whole country has been productive of forest growths, but the greater part has been burned over in recent years, and the bulk of that is more or less open, or covered with a light growth of poplar and scrub, requiring a certain amount of clearing before the land can be tilled or cultivated. There are occasional swamps or muskegs some covered with grass, and others with small tamarac or spruce. Good grazing is to be had in the open, in the swamps, or among the scrub. In the cultivated areas there was a luxuriant growth this year of all northern grown vegetables, grasses and grains.



## PROOF BY RESULTS

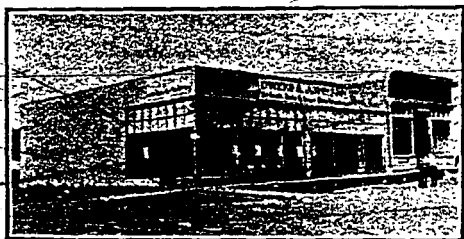
The growing qualities of our soil and climate were admirably shown at the fall fair described in part by the Edmonton Bulletin as follows:—The pre-eminence of the Edson Fair lay in the superior showing of garden produce and grains garnered from scores of homesteads in a territory extending from points on the McLeod River twenty miles west to the fertile Shining Bank District thirty-five miles to the northeast. Such an exhibit would reflect national credit upon the most favored spot in the Province, but when brought forth from such a remote district as Edson

the display was little short of marvelous. Again it says: When in the course of his address to the people of the Edson District Wednesday afternoon, one of the provincial judges remarked that the display in the exhibition building was one of the best he had ever seen in Alberta or elsewhere during many years experience as a judge, he paid a tribute to the high standard of the annual fair which was unquestionably deserved. Although but a comparative newcomer amongst Alberta exhibitions this third annual event of Edson was in many respects superior to any other in the Province this year, barring not even the big fairs at Edmonton and Calgary.

## CLIMATE AND LIVE STOCK

The adaptability of the climate of Alberta for raising all kinds of live stock has been exemplified year after year. Edson is particularly favored by the influences that make the Alberta climate so desirable. Our summer climate is very similar to the average of the Western Canadian prairies, with the exception that we have a more abundant and more reliable rainfall during the growing season. Our winter climate is

mild without being soft; sufficient snow for sleighing; and almost no severe weather. It is thus admirably adapted for the raising of live stock, which will ultimately be the principal product of the farming district.



## SETTLEMENTS AND ROADS

The community is now on a permanent basis, and both town and country aim at the expansion of the farming community into one second to none. There is room and desirable land yet for thousands of settlers along the McLeod Valley and other country tributary to Edson. And the local development of the resources referred to in the earlier part of this booklet will keep up a demand for produce and stock for which Edson will be the distributing point.

The incoming settler on reaching this district will find that the territory of Edson has received marked attention from the Provincial Government in its road making programme. Since the advent of the Grand Trunk Pacific, road making has been carried on extensively each year but during the last two years the various settlements have been connected together, necessitating no less than 75 miles of new road making including a number of important bridges during that time.

The principal work has been done in the following settlements: Shining Bank, Mahaska, McLeod Valley, Peers, Carrot Creek, Niton, Poison Creek, Reservoir, Mussel, Parkcourt, Wolf Creek, Horner, Yates, Edson River, Tollerton, Big Eddy, Bickerdike, Sundance, Marlboro; and on through trunk lines connecting the various settlements with the town of Edson, as well as a trunk road from Edson to Grande Prairie. Ferries have been established at suitable points on the McLeod and Athabasca Rivers.

The Edson Rural Municipality has also done good work in the way of road making within its corporate limits.

The Edson Board of Trade would refer intending settlers to the letters of representative farmers, extracts from which follow:

Mr. Robert Riddle writes from Sundance Settlement:—

I am situated 12 miles west of Edson. The soil is of a sandy loam character in most cases almost free from stones.

I have proved that I can ripen barley and oats in an average season and if the season is good can ripen wheat. I have tried potatoes and vegetables with success raising potatoes as high as 230 bushels to the acre and always of first class quality.

There is abundance of good timber available for building log houses, etc.

Mr. J.H.B. Smith, Reeve of Edson Rural Municipality, writes from Wolf Creek nine miles east of Edson:—

I am of the same opinion now as I have been for years that the future success of agriculture in this part of the country is assured. I cut my spring rye in the middle of June and it averaged about 66 inches in height. The wheat was then in head. Last year I sowed alfalfa on inoculated land and it has produced good results.

I may say I have lived here since the spring of 1907 and I am quite satisfied with the country.

Wilson Brothers write:—

In response to your request for our view on the farming prospects of the district, we might say that if we ever doubted the possibilities of the district this season has more than convinced us of the great future of the country around Edson as a mixed farming country. ~~The~~ land around here (five miles north-west of Edson) is mostly clay loam, with a few acres of sandy loam here and there some black muck and muskeg. The timber is light poplar and pine with a few spruce; the pine and spruce coming in very handy for log buildings, and several settlers are making their own shingles out of white pine.

Potatoes and all kinds of vegetables do exceedingly well and we have found that with the help of a little fertilizer a good crop of potatoes can be grown on first breaking.

Prelude wheat was ripe this year the middle of August, and barley the 20th. Some oats cut for green feed attained the height of six feet, and field corn



was tried this year for the first time making a very good showing, although this past season has been recognized as most unfavorable for corn growing all over the west. As regards the muskegs they seem to dry up year after year and make splendid pasture land after the stock has tramped the moss down a little.

J. K. Taylor of Shining Bank writes:

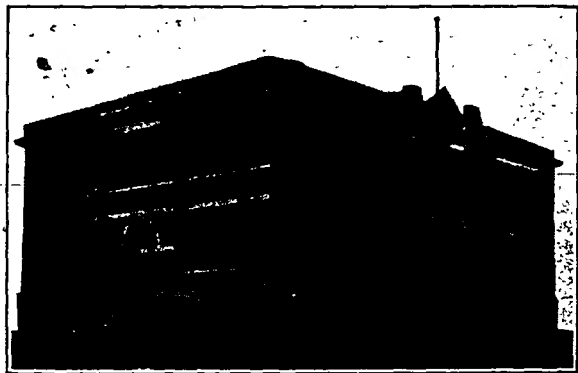
I came from Amery, Wis. to the Last Mountain Valley, Sâsk. in the spring of 1903. My wife and I thought it the best country we had ever lived in excepting that it was pretty cold in winter and the wind blew a good deal. But we did splendidly all the time we were there never losing a crop in seven years. We then sold out expecting to retire and went back to the States for that purpose, but not finding it to our liking came back and bought two South African Scripts.

After spending some time looking around we came to Edson and located in the Shining Bank district. We consider this the best country we ever lived in. I haven't farmed much here as it should be understood I am living retired but all

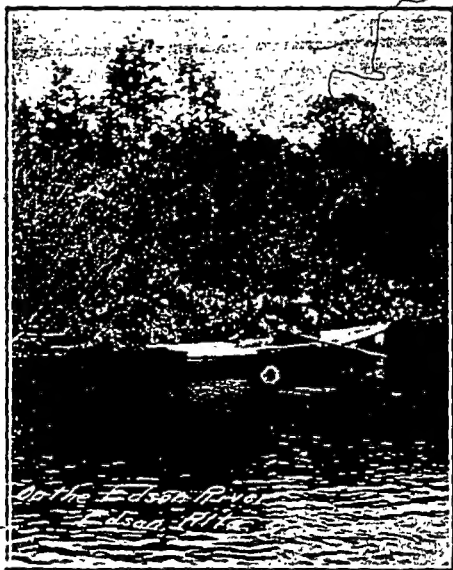
those here who are farming are meeting with pleasing results. Wheat oats and barley do splendidly. I never saw more perfect wheat and when put in properly it is a sure crop. The potatoes are of a superior quality. The soil here is of the best and well watered with spring brooks. This is what is called a scrub country. There are also a few stones in places which of course are some sort of an encumbrance; but there is plenty of timber available for all purposes. There is no alkali and we will never have to irrigate as we always have plenty of rain. There is very little wind and the winters are very mild.

The Board of Trade is informed that settlers effects in car lots of 24,000 lbs. can be shipped to Edson from the following points at the rates per car set out,

Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie and North Portal	\$ 61.20
Prince Rupert	128.40
Seattle, Vancouver and Victoria	176.40
Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto	140 40
Chicago	74.00
St. Paul	70.00



Edson has always shown a keen interest in educational matters and has built and equipped one of the finest schools in the Province



On the Edison River  
Edison, Ill.